

Army Senior Fellows

CORNERSTONE

Army Leaders for the 21st Century!

Open the Door By Karen Nolan

In my article Opportunity Knocks, November Newsletter, Volume 1, Issue 1, I addressed the opportunities the Army Senior Fellows Program provides for you. Are you opening the door?

This month marks my one-year anniversary with the program. Adding Terry and Jannie to the team has ensured you a one of a kind program. Never quite satisfied that we've done enough, we are continuing to pursue new and exciting professional development opportunities at world class institutions and we are establishing relationships with the leadership and staff of those organizations to allow us guaranteed seats for you. This year we initiated individual executive development plans that projected your 24 month training and leadership assignments. This plan gives you a predictable roadmap to guide you through leadership assignments, education events, and calendar your mentorship meetings. Getting the most out of your ASF Program is a factor of how well you navigate this roadmap.

We are continually working with the Joint staff, Office of Secretary of Defense, Army Staff, Combatant Commanders, Army Commands, and other Federal Agencies to customize the right executive leadership assignment for you. I emphasize "leadership". These assignments are an opportunity for you to hone your expertise and to better understand the business of the Army. We select cutting-edge positions where the future of the Army is unfolding, i.e. the Enterprise Task Force, Diversity Task Force, Army Materiel Command, Africa Command and others. Assimilate quickly into the organization, step up to the leadership challenge, and leave a legacy.

We have coupled the educational and leadership opportunities with a mentorship program. The mentor/mentee relationship allows you to have an active sharing of experiences with a member of the Senior Executive Service. Energized by the exciting Kick-Off in December and now 60 days into the program you should be scheduling your third meeting with your mentor. This month's training module focuses on *feedback structure and style*. As stated in Pathbuilders March module, "Our job as leaders is to master the art of giving, receiving, and continually seeking feedback on a regular basis." Using this module at your next meeting will benefit you and your mentor. Remember, Pathbuilders tells us from their experience the mentee is the driver in the most successful relationships.

Open the door to your post ASF experience. In February, I laid out for you our four-pronged approach to place our 2007 ASF. This includes 1) your own initiative for exploring and applying for position of interest, 2) Graduate Placement Program, 3) Central Talent Management, and 4) ASF Letters of Recommendations. An important part of the approach is our bold initiative to go out with letters of recommendation to senior leadership in commands/agencies where you have an employment interest. This is like a sales person making a cold call, we don't know their interest, there are no vacancies listed but we want them to know what a valuable product we have and see if we can close a deal. The ASF staff needs your support to make this happen. We want to know your wish list. We need you to tell us what you want us to sell for you. If you see opportunities in the agency you are assigned for your leadership assignment, don't hesitate to tell them you are interested in working for them post ASF. Our ability to do a management reassignment is a selling point for any organization that is accustomed to waiting over 90-days to fill vacancies. Placement is as much your responsibility as ours.

Opportunities are not gifts — they require active engagement from you. When opportunity knocks, open the door!

Quote of the Quarter:

It is the Cornerstone that ensures successful completion of the structure.

Terry Robinson, ASFP Staff

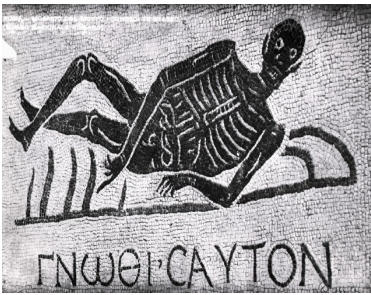


Quick Thoughts

- **Cornerstone!**
26-21 July 09 will be here before you know it!
- NSPS Interim Reviews are almost upon us. The anticipated due date is sometime mid-April. Exact schedules will be announced later.

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Know Thyself By Charles Fritz

The ideal to "know thyself", first advanced by various Greek philosophers, conjures an inward journey based on humanistic principles and spiritual revelation. However, to know thyself well enough to relate to others is as challenging and as elusive. Following a recent Army Senior Fellows Program-sponsored training, I read a Bob Tannenbaum selection on self-awareness. I also revisited an article from the Harvard Business Review: What Makes a Leader? by Daniel Goleman (January 2004). Goleman reinforces several points learned as children and professed by elders, and those which formed the center of that training. A softer side of leadership includes self-awareness, analysis, and management, and how one should relate to others on a personal level. All of these are keys to effective interaction, communication, and most importantly, leadership.

In Tannenbaum's article "Self-Awareness: An Essential Element Underlying Leadership Effectiveness" (NTL, 1999) he asserts leadership effectiveness results from two "interrelated wellsprings," the leader's: (1) collected leadership knowledge and (2) emotional self awareness. Further, Tannenbaum claims while the former receives most treatment in scholarly journals, the latter is more crucial to a leader's effectiveness. In his paper, Goleman approaches self awareness with an important and similar message, the same message delivered during my training experience and one which resonates in me as a leader.

In his rather scholarly treatment, Goleman, the well known author of the Emotional Intelligence (Bantam, 1995), asserts self-awareness is the "...deep understanding of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives" and is central to successful leadership. Understanding one's self enables a leader to make an honest assessment of self, others, and situations. Self-awareness coupled with self-regulation—a leader's ability to control emotions which naturally arise—create trust and fairness in the workplace. It is regulation which begins to move from personal understanding to personal action. Further, the positive example of a leader in firm emotional control permeates the organization, enabling others. When others act in control, friction is reduced and flexibility to changing priorities and circumstances realized. Finally, Goleman contends successful leaders are motivated to achieve excellence. They set increasingly challenging goals for followers and ask why things are done. This restlessness with the status quo is a hallmark of great leaders.

According to Goleman, putting awareness, regulation and motivation to work in an interpersonal context involves empathy and social skill. Goleman defines empathy as one's ability to recognize and understand other's emotions, then interact based on those emotions. Further, he asserts social skill is "friendliness with a purpose" or one's ability to build and maintain relationships by reaching common ground and connection. These two skills bring action to and are founded on the previously discussed understandings; these are paramount for effective leadership. For without action, self awareness and similar discussions are best left to philosophers. So, are self-awareness and regulation, combined with motivation-informed empathy and social skill-enabled leadership more important than a complex, technical knowledge?

I say, "yes!" While I agree a leader devoid of technical skill could find challenges where others might not, a leader with a skewed sense of self will fail to see others and situations as they really are, act incongruent with purpose, and alienate those around them. Devoid of self awareness, Tannenbaum contends one's acts will be "...determined not by reality of what is "out there," but rather by [the] unknowns within...." Similarly, if one cannot act with empathy and given social skill, all positive intention, understanding, and sentiment will be lost during a failed interaction. The training I attended, a T-Group Experience offered by the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, focused my attention on several subjects targeting the topics above. However, the most compelling personal lesson came from an increasing awareness of how my perceptions, thoughts, and actions impact those I lead. Enabled by a deeper understanding of self, I learned to associate impact with intent, to better assess my individual awareness, assumptions, and beliefs relative to others and situations; and renew my commitment to building purposeful relationships and being aware of other's emotions. For me, this affirmation of the importance of the "softer side" of leadership is both inspirational and gratifying. The fact it is not a foreign concept to me is a testament to our Army's comprehensive leadership training, its countless inspirational mentors, and a combined willingness to seek out the best in our people. Therefore, to know thyself is to learn to *know others*.

"The positive example of a leader in firm emotional control permeates the organization, enabling others; when others act in control, friction is reduced and flexibility to changing priorities and circumstances."

Education Station By Terry Robinson

Every once in a while even the most dedicated professionals need a little priming to keep the well of life-long learning flowing at maximum capacity. One method to keep the flow going is through Continual Learning. The Civilian Leader Improvement Battery (CLIMB), the tool used to tailor Individual Executive Development Plans to each ASF, reinforces Continual Learning or the habit of life-long learning. CLIMB defines continual learning as “grasping the essence of new information; mastering new technical and business knowledge; recognizing your own strengths and weaknesses; pursuing self-development; seeking feedback from others and opportunities to master new knowledge.” Obviously, you are continual learners or you would not be in this program, but how have you been doing lately? I would like to address the self-development aspect of the continual learning definition.

Self-development is a continuous process fueled by self-awareness and the desire to grow. Whether attending conferences, affiliating with professional organizations, attending advance schooling, completing correspondence courses, reading professional articles, or writing professionally — all increase your level of expertise and the value you bring to the fight.

BINGO! The aim of the Army Senior Fellows Program is to assist a select group of high potential Army Civilians in furthering their growth through self-development, feedback from others and opportunities to master new knowledge and executive education. Continual learning in nutshell is a never-ending learning process nurtured by the ambition and desire to grow.

There are many tools, formats, and forums available to assist the avid Army Civilian self-developer and the Army Senior Fellows program endorses them all. Some of the many venues available to you include: distance learning (DL), communities of practice, knowledge management repositories, distributed learning, resident learning, nonresident learning, and webinars and/or webcast.

If you come across other sources of learning that you think will enhance your senior executive skill set or may possibly benefit any of the other Army Senior Fellows, please pass them along to me so that I can share, collect, and reposit the information. I may also be able to assist you with securing funding for your participation in the learning experience if it meets certain criteria. Learning, after all, should be a lifelong process that leads to self enrichment and fulfillment. What have you learned lately?

Mentorship Corner By Helene Lollis, Pathbuilders, Inc

What differentiates a mentoring partnership from other learning experiences is the ongoing relationship developed between mentee and mentor. This connection creates the opportunity for discussing a myriad of items; however, it is essential to be strategic in how you spend your time together. As you plan each of your sessions, it is vital that you consider how to balance your discussions to include both immediate and longer-range issues. While it is easy to get caught up in short term discussions (e.g., the proper way to present ECQs and the SES interview process), it is important to recognize that the value of your mentoring partnership extends beyond the immediate. Your mentors have not only been selected for the SES, but they continue to take on new challenges while developing others around them – insight that is invaluable to tap into.

The most successful partnerships create meeting plans that bring together three key elements – follow-up from the last session, discussion of one or two key short-term issues, ongoing discussion of one or more larger, longer-term issues.

✦ Follow-up creates the opportunity for the partnership to provide feedback to each other – What has the mentee done differently? How has it worked? What has been the outcome?

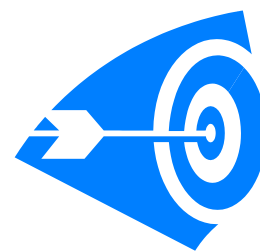
✦ Short-term issues often include discussing a key upcoming meeting or interview, brainstorming about a particular situation in school or in your executive assignment.

Longer-term issues can include a wide-range of areas such as developing career goals, assessing priorities and values, redefining how the mentee is perceived by others.

Each partnership is unique, and each Fellow is responsible for creating meeting plans that align with their goals for the mentorship. Your time together goes quickly, so be sure to maximize your learning by addressing the three areas listed above each time you meet—it creates context to ensure that you make progress on both your long-term and short-term career goals.

Follow Up!

Since our inaugural Cornerstone Newsletter, the number of Army Senior Fellows submitting After Action Reports after completing senior executive educational experiences has risen significantly. Thanks for assisting our staff in ensuring that you are receiving the quality education you and the Army deserve. Your feedback helps to validate whether we are doing the right thing and greatly assist with our decision making process.



Follow Up!

Thanks to all of the Fellows for sharing your feedback with Pathbuilders on the progress in your partnerships – we take your comments very seriously, and we will continue to refine the program to meet your needs!



Helen Tierney, Member ASF Alumni

From Our ASF Alumni

When I was applying for SES positions and was getting a little discouraged with the process, I talked to my mentor. She offered encouragement – and told me that while I had a competitive application, I should not get discouraged if I was not initially selected for an SES position. The important thing she said was to keep working to improve my skills and to keep applying for SES positions where I had a good skill set match. She told me the right job would come along. She was correct.

I think, as does my mentor, that once you have the kind of credentials that get you selected for the ASF Program, you have the right credentials to be selected for an SES position. However, you need to have your application in for the right job at the right time. You also need to have just the

right set of credentials and the right answers for the interview panel. Moreover, you need to be the best-qualified candidate to be selected.

I can think of no better opportunity than what the ASF Program offers -- for you to hone your skills, improve your knowledge and experience, and generally to get the polish that will get you selected for your ideal job. Looking back, I see what a once in a lifetime opportunity was provided to me by the ASF program – and strongly encourage you to use your time in the program to do everything possible to broaden your skills and knowledge in any way you can. The effort invested will pay off. Assignments and training that don't sound promising at first have a way of being highly relevant at a later time.

Being a SES is exhilarating. My current job is the most demanding position I have ever held – but also the most rewarding. Keep sharpening your skills and keep applying for SES positions. You will get selected. If I can help in anyway – please give me a call.

Fellows in the News

“Taking the Pentagon to the People”. On February 24-26, Ms. Anna Carter supported the 2009 Department of Defense Outreach and African American History Month Observance Program at Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University in Huntsville, Alabama. This annual event, known as “Taking the Pentagon to the People” is sponsored by the DoD Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity. It is aimed at motivating middle school, high school and college students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) to seek military or civilian career opportunities within the Department of Defense.

CGEIT Certification for Rick Anderson. Congratulations to Rick Anderson for receiving the Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT) designation. According to ISACA (known only by the acronym), who grants the CGEIT certification, the CGEIT is intended to recognize a wide range of professionals for their knowledge and application of IT governance principles and practices.

Promotion to Colonel. Congratulations are also in order to Larry Howard, a member of the United States Army Reserves on his recent promotion to Colonel.

Fellows on the Move

Sophronia Riley is currently on assignment as the Executive Development Director at the Army Civilian University.

Bruce Jaeger is actively engaged in a strategic communications program for Future Combat Systems at the Army Capabilities Integration Center.

We bid a fond farewell **Dr. Robert Simmonds** who leaves the ASFP for an Operations Research Analyst position at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Military Personnel Policy, Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management Office. We wish Dr. Simmonds success in his future endeavors.

Army Leaders for the 21st Century.

The Army Senior Fellows Program is designed for top performing GS 14 /15s and their NSPS counterparts who are interested in advancing their senior leadership potential.

The Army Senior Fellows Program, initiated in 2007 by the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Army, is a two year program of education, executive leadership assignments, and mentoring. The program strengthens participant's Executive Core Qualifications and grooms candidates for senior leadership positions.

The Army needs strong civilian leaders who embody the civilian creed, can shape the Army's transformation efforts, and have the breadth of experience to oper-

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